

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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|-------------|--|-----------------|----------------|
| Applicant: | Zheng et al. | Examiner: | UNKNOWN |
| Serial No.: | TO BE ASSIGNED | Group Art Unit: | TO BE ASSIGNED |
| Filed: | May 30, 2001 | Docket No.: | 975.343US01 |
| Title: | METHOD OF COMMUNICATING A FLOW OF DATA PACKETS ACROSS A NETWORK | | |

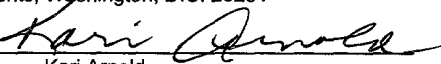
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The undersigned hereby certifies that this Transmittal Letter and the paper or fee, as described herein, are being deposited with the United States Postal Service 'Express Mail Post Office To Addressee' service under 37 CFR 1.10 and is addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231

By:


Kari Arnold

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Box Patent Application
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Please enter the following preliminary amendment into the above-referenced application.

ABSTRACT

Please insert the attached abstract into the application as the last page thereof.

CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 2, and 3 as follows. A clean copy of the entire set of claims is included below. A marked up copy of the amended claims is included in Appendix A.

combination of said source address and said destination address and said flow identity number.

2. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of recognizing by said routing means that data packets belong together by identifying a flow thereof by means of the flow identity number itself, or by combination of said source address and said flow identity number, or by combination of said source address and said destination address and said flow identity number; and processing said flow by said routing means.

3. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the communication is done via the Internet Protocol according to version 6 thereof, so that the data packets are structured according to the document "Request for Comments 2460" of the "Internet Engineering Task Force".

4. A method according to claim 3, wherein said header field containing said flow identity number is a flow identity option field in the Hop-By-Hop Options header.

5. A method according to claim 4, wherein said flow of data packets corresponds to a Voice over Internet Protocol call.

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REMARKS

The above preliminary amendment is made to insert an abstract page into the application and to amend claims 1, 2 and 3.

Applicant respectfully requests that this preliminary amendment be entered into the record prior to calculation of the filing fee and prior to examination and consideration of the above-identified application.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicant's attorney of record, Michael B. Lasky at 952-912-0527.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: May 30, 2001

By:

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Marked Up Version of the Amended Claims

1. (Amended) A method of communicating a flow of data packets across a network,

said network comprising routing means including communication nodes and communication endpoints, wherein a data packet is structured to have a plurality of fields including header fields and payload fields and such a data packet is communicated from endpoint to endpoint via at least one node;

the method comprising the steps of

generating [(S31)] a flow identity number for said flow by an originating endpoint of said flow;

writing [(S32)], by said originating endpoint, at least a source address of said flow and a destination address of said flow into header fields of each of data packets belonging to said flow;

writing [(S32)] said flow identity number into a header field of each data packet belonging to said flow which is examined by every routing means along the communication path of said flow, but remains unchanged during the whole communication; and

examining [(S33)] the header fields containing said flow identity number, said source address and said destination address by every [(S36)] routing means along the communication path of said flow, wherein

said flow is uniquely identified by the flow identity number being unique itself, or by combination of said source address and said flow identity number, or by

[illegible]

